



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Pilot Study on Islamic Education Teachers' Perspectives on Mentoring Practices by the Head of the Islamic Education Panel and Their Impact on Teacher Quality

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Aug 13, 2024	This study investigates Islamic Education (IEC) teachers' views on the mentoring practices implemented by the Head of the Islamic Education Panel in schools and examines their relationship with the quality of IEC teachers. A pilot study was conducted with 33 IEC teachers in Sarawak, utilizing a research questionnaire comprising 29 items, administered online. Descriptive statistics—such as frequencies, mean scores, standard deviations, and percentages—were employed for data analysis. The findings revealed that both the perception scores of IEC teachers regarding mentoring practices and their overall impressions were modest. This underscores the crucial role the Head of the Islamic Education Panel plays in guiding IEC teachers within schools. The implications suggest that effective mentoring practices can significantly enhance the quality of IEC teachers, particularly in teaching and learning aspects.
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INTRODUCTION

In Malaysia, teacher mentoring programs have emerged as a crucial element of professional development, aimed at enhancing teaching quality and boosting student academic performance. Research indicates a strong correlation between teacher quality and student achievement (Vijayaamalar & Suhaida, 2013; Aizat et al., 2018; Nur Farhah & Nur Fatimah, 2018). Teacher quality can be bolstered through initiatives such as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), research, training courses, and mentoring programs (Moe, 2016). Mentoring serves as a key ongoing professional development strategy to enhance teacher competencies.

Previous studies highlight the positive impact of mentoring programs on mentors, mentees, and educational organizations (Yuanyuan Zhang et al., 2016; Athanasiou et al., 2016; John et al., 2020). Moreover, these programs can also support experienced teachers who lack formal induction assistance (Campbell et al. 2017; Ferman-Nomser, 2012; Hobson et al. 2009). Therefore, fostering both formal and informal mentoring discussions among teachers is essential to address challenges

faced by novice educators (Tang Keow Ngang et al., 2014). Cultivating a mentoring culture in schools can effectively tackle various teaching-related issues.

Problem Statement

Research has established a link between teacher quality and student performance (Wen-Hwa Ko & Feng-Ming Chung, 2014; Eric & Ludger, 2017; Saleman et al., 2019; Joacim et al., 2019; Ketut et al., 2022). However, challenges persist regarding teachers' instructional effectiveness in schools. A study by Nilgün & Mehmet (2017) revealed that novice teachers require pedagogical guidance. These educators often encounter difficulties in classroom management, student behavior, teaching resources, and overall awareness as they begin their careers (Goh, Qismullah, and Wong, 2017; Tengku Sarina & Fatimah, 2018). Furthermore, the knowledge level of teachers, particularly regarding specific pedagogical aspects, remains modest (Zurina et al., 2021). In addition, the findings show that the students faced some challenges regarding the learning environment, learning resources, technical problems, and concentration (Rahman & Lee, 2022). This also applies to teachers who teach subjects outside the specialization field and need guidance and support from all parties (Banu & Mua'Azam, 2018). The study by Hafizati Husna & Suziyani (2021) found that teacher competence is not an option from the aspects of knowledge and skills which are overall at a modest level and need to be improved. When focusing on the quality of Islamic Education (IEC) teachers as well, the reviewer found that there are several aspects that require attention and improvement. Islamic Education (IEC) teachers have a modest understanding of teaching creativity and classroom practices (Mohd.Yusoff, 2016). While according to Badrul Hisham & Mohd Nasruddin (2016), critical thinking in teaching and learning still needs to be improved. This is in line with the findings of a study (Wardyawaty & Mohd Isa, 2020) showing the level of critical thinking and practice of PAK21 among Islamic Education (IEC) teachers is also at a simple stage.

In addition, Islamic Education (IEC) teachers has a modest level of proficiency and attitude towards online teaching availability (Nurul Farhana and Mohd Faisal, 2021). The use of technology in teaching among JAIS Islamic education teachers is at a modestly low level (Sapie et al., 2022). Findings reveal some positive impacts of the implementation of technology, which include positive student engagement, better catering for diverse learners and improved education quality (Shuima & Aneela, 2024). In this case, various parties need to add good programs to produce teachers who are skilled, knowledgeable and willing to carry out their duties brilliantly (Maimun et al., 2017). Therefore, mentoring practice is among the efforts that can be implemented by the school to improve teacher professionalism. Guidance and mentoring by the Head of Islamic Education Panel as the Middle Leaders Team (MLT) in schools can increase teacher efficacy.

Objective of The Study

This study aims to:

1. Determine the level of reliability of the questionnaire instruments to be used in real studies by the method of internal consistency.
2. Identify the Islamic Education (IEC) teachers' perception of the practice of the chairman of the committee mentoring in schools.
3. Identify the Islamic Education (IEC) teachers' perception of the effect of the mentoring practice.

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sampling

The population in this study is Islamic Education (IEC) teachers who teach in Sarawak. In this study, only a total of 33 Islamic education teachers in Sarawak were selected as respondents to the survey. Generally, the number of samples of a pilot study does not require the number of samples many. To

conduct a pilot study, Johanson and Brooks (2010) suggest the number of the minimum sample size is only 30 people. By conducting research on some of the respondents in a population that has similar characteristics to the actual sample of the study, an initial description of the findings to be obtained after conducting the study real can be measured.

Study Instrument

The reviewer used a probing question as the study instrument to facilitate the data acquisition process. According to Pratt (1980), probes make it easier for the researcher to collect data from respondents who are in different places and limited respondent time to get precise information. Meanwhile, the cost is also quite low compared to other data collection methods (Gillham, 2000). The study instrument has been developed by the reviewer based on the Malaysian Education Quality Standard (2010), where the reviewer has made slight changes and additions to ensure that every word and term used in the research question has a clear meaning and is understood by the study respondents. The questionnaire in this study is divided into three parts. Section A is for the demographic information of the respondents, Section B is for the teacher assessment and Section C is about the assessment's impact on teacher quality. A 4 Likert scale was used in measuring Islamic Education (IEC) teachers' perception.

Pilot Study

A pilot study has been conducted to measure the validity and reliability of the instrument items developed. The results of the pilot study found that the Cronbach alpha value was 0.969. Referring to Chua Yan Piaw (2011), if the reliability exceeds 0.8, then this value is found to be sufficient to be accepted as an appropriate level of reliability for an instrument.

Data Collection Method

The data for this study was collected via an online questionnaire. The advantage of this method is that it saves costs, is easy to manage and the respondent reach is more sumptuous.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the respondent profile and the questionnaire. The information in the questionnaire was translated in the form of min, standard deviation and percentage using SPSS version 23.0. To determine the validity of min, min scoring by Jamil (2002) has been used as in Table 1.

Table 1. Min Score Assessment

Min Score	Level
3.67 to 5.00	High
2.67 to 3.66	Simple
1.00 to 2.66	Low

STUDY FINDINGS

Demographic Profile of the Study

The study involved 33 Islamic Education (IEC) teachers, teaching in primary and secondary schools in the Northern, Central and southern zones of Sarawak. The analysis of the teacher's background focused on the demographic information of respondents. The profile of the respondent is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic Distribution of the Study Sample

Study Sample	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	8	24.24
	Female	25	75.76
Race	Malays	27	81.82
	Chinese	0	0
	India	0	0
	Bumiputera Sarawak / Sabah	6	18.18
	Other	0	0
Highest Academic Qualification	Diploma	1	3.03
	Bachelor's Degree	29	87.88
	Master's Degree	3	9.09
	PhD	0	0
Option	Islamic Education	27	81.82
	Islamic Sharia Education	1	3.03
	Quran and Sunnah Education	1	3.03
	Arabic	4	12.12
	Other	0	0
Positions at School	Head of Islamic Education Panel	9	27.27
	Assistant Head of Islamic Education Panel	1	3.03
	Teacher Of Islamic Education	23	69.70
Service Experience	1 to 5 years	20	60.61
	6 to 10 years	4	12.12
	11 to 15 years	6	18.18
	16 to 20 years	0	0
	21 and above	3	9.09
Types Of Schools	Sekolah Kebangsaan	15	45.45
	Sekolah Menengah Jenis Kebangsaan	0	0
	Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan	13	39.39
	Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama	4	12.12
	Sekolah Menengah Berasrama Penuh	1	3.03
		0	0
School Location	City	15	45.45
	Rural	17	51.52
	Interior	1	3.03

A total of eight (24.24%) subjects were male teachers, while 25 (75.76%) were female teachers. This shows that the number of female teachers are more respondents to the study. In terms of race, a total of 25 people (81.82%) of the respondents were Malays and the remaining seven people (18.18%) were Bumiputera Sabah/Sarawak.

There are three people (9.09%) who have the highest academic qualifications at the Undergraduate Level, 29 people (87.88%) at The Bachelor's degree level, and one (3.03%) at the Diploma level. In total, 27 people (58.1%) had Islamic Educations option, one (3.03%) had Islamic Sharia Education option, one (3.03%) had Quran and Sunnah Education option and four (12.12%) had Arabic option. The researchers did not limit the survey respondents to teachers who teach Islamic education subjects only, because the study focuses more on the practice of mentoring in schools.

The majority of teachers are Islamic Education (IEC) teachers which is 23 people (69.70%), while nine people (27.27%) hold positions as Head of Islamic Education Panel, while one (3.03) holds positions as assistant Head of Islamic Education Panel. In terms of teaching experience, the highest percentage of study subjects who had teaching experience between 0-5 years were 20 people (60.61%), the second highest were those with experience of 11-15 years with six people (18.18%) and three people (9.09%) who had served 21 years and above. This shows that many of the respondents are novice teachers.

A total of 15 people (45.45%) study subjects were teachers who taught at Sekolah Kebangsaan (SK), 13 people (39.39%) teachers taught at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan (SMK), four teachers (12.12%) taught at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Agama (SMKA) and one teacher (3.03%) taught at Sekolah Berasrama Penuh (SBP). The majority of respondents were from urban schools, namely 15 people (45.45 %), 17 people (1%) in rural schools, while one (3.03%) in rural schools.

Islamic Education (IEC) Teachers Perception Level of Mentoring Practice by Head of Islamic Education Panel

Table 2 illustrates the perceptions of Islamic Education (IEC) teachers regarding the level of mentoring practice by the head of the committee. A descriptive analysis involving mean and standard deviation was used to determine the level of mentoring practices. Overall, the overall mean is 3.00 with a standard deviation of 0.760, that is, it is at a moderate level. This shows that the guidance of mentoring practices carried out by Head of Islamic Education Panel not yet reached a high level of effectiveness in guiding the Islamic Education (IEC) teachers in the teaching and learning aspect. The item with the lowest mean is the 10 " Head of Islamic Education Panel item guiding the Islamic Education (IEC) teachers using information technology in teaching and learning" and item 11, namely "the Islamic Education (IEC) teachers guides the Islamic Education (IEC) teaching supervision based on Standard Kualiti Pendidikan Malaysia (SKPM)." with a mean of 2.88 and SD = 0.857. In terms of frequency and percentage of 2 people (6.06%) stated never at all, as many as 2 people (6.06%) occasionally, as many as 15 people (45.45%) often, while 8 people (24.24%) very often..

Table 3. Level of Islamic Education (IEC) teachers Perception of Performance Practice Head of Islamic Education Panel

No.	Item	Never Directly	Once in a While	Often	Very Often	Min	Standard deviation	Level
1	Head of Islamic Education Panel a mentor to Islamic Education (IEC) teachers in the management of the classroom.	2	4	17	10	3.09	.765	Medium
2	Head of Islamic Education Panel as a mentor to Islamic Education (IEC) teachers understands about the management of committee files.	1	4	18	10	3.12	.740	Medium
3	Head of Islamic Education Panel Mentors Islamic Education (IEC) teachers to understand the Standard Curriculum and Assessment Document (DSKP) being taught.	2	6	16	9	2.97	.847	Medium

4	Head of Islamic Education Panel guides Islamic Education (IEC) teachers to specify the Standard Content of DSKP PI in teaching and learning.	2	6	17	8	2.94	.827	Medium
5	Head of Islamic Education Panel guided Islamic Education (IEC) teachers to understand the implementation of School-based Assessment (PBS).	2	4	17	10	3.06	.827	Medium
6	Head of Islamic Education Panel guided Islamic Education (IEC) teachers regarding the <i>Pentaksiran Bilik Darjah</i> (PBD).	2	4	16	11	3.09	.843	Medium
7	Head of Islamic Education Panel guided Islamic Education (IEC) teachers to understand the various methods and techniques in teaching and learning.	2	5	16	10	3.03	.847	Medium
8	Head of Islamic Education Panel guided Islamic Education (IEC) teachers on the application of the elements of Higher Order Thinking Skills (KBAT) in teaching and learning.	1	6	16	10	3.03	.847	Medium
9	Head of Islamic Education Panel guided Islamic Education (IEC) teachers on the application of 21st Century Learning (PAK21).	2	6	16	9	2.97	.847	Medium
10	Head of Islamic Education Panel guides Islamic Education (IEC) teachers to use information technology in teaching and learning.	2	8	15	8	2.88	.857	Medium
11	Head of Islamic Education Panel guiding Islamic Education (IEC) teachers after teaching supervision based on <i>Standard Kualiti Pendidikan Malaysia</i> (SKPM).	2	8	15	8	2.88	.857	Medium
12	Head of Islamic Education Panel guided Islamic Education (IEC) teachers on effective questioning techniques.	2	6	17	8	2.94	.827	Medium
13	Head of Islamic Education Panel guided Islamic Education (IEC) teachers on the application of values in class.	2	4	19	8	3.00	.791	Medium

14	Head of Islamic Education Panel explained to Islamic Education (IEC) teachers the importance of students as active learners in teaching and learning.	2	5	17	9	3.00	.829	Medium
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Islamic Education (IEC) teachers' level of perception on the impact of mentoring practices on Teaching and Learning quality

Table 4 shows descriptive statistics relating to Islamic Education (IEC) teachers' perceptions of the impact of mentoring practices on teacher quality. Descriptive analysis involving mean and standard deviation was used to determine the level of perception of Islamic Education (IEC) teachers. Overall, the overall mean is 3.1859 with a standard deviation of 0.60868, that is, it is at a moderate level. This means that the Islamic Education (IEC) teachers considers that mentoring practices have less impact on improving the quality of teachers. The Item with the lowest mean high is item 3 "Islamic Education (IEC) teachers can master all the skills needed to teach Islamic Education (IEC) subjects as a result of KP guidance" with a mean of 3.09 and SD = 0.678. In terms of frequency and percentage showed a total of six people Islamic Education (IEC) teachers I (18.18%) for occasional items, a total of 18 people (54.55%) for frequent, a total of 9 people (27.27%) for very frequent while 8 people (24.24%) are very frequent.

Table 4. Islamic Education (IEC) Teachers Level of Perception on the Impact of Mentoring Practices on Teaching and Learning Quality

No.	Item	Never Directly	Once in a While	Often	Very Often	Min	Standard deviation	Level
1	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers are more confident in delivering Islamic Education content after receiving Head of Islamic Education Panel guidance.	0	5	17	11	3.18	.683	Medium
2	Students easily understand what the Islamic Education (IEC) teachers conveys after Head of Islamic Education Panel guidance.	0	4	18	11	3.21	.650	Medium
3	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers can master all the skills needed to teach Islamic Education subjects as a result of Head of Islamic Education Panel guidance	0	6	18	9	3.09	.678	Medium
4	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers can teach every topic/component in Islamic Education subjects after mentorship.	0	5	17	11	3.18	.683	Medium
5	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers is able to interact with students well after coaching.	0	3	18	12	3.27	.626	Medium

6	The Islamic Education (IEC) teachers structure the teaching plan well after the mentorship.	0	3	18	12	3.27	.626	Medium
7	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers has have the ability to use various types of teaching strategies after coaching.	0	4	17	12	3.24	.663	Medium
8	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers can assess student performance continuously after guidance.	0	4	18	11	3.21	.650	Medium
9	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers is able to identify students' needs after mentoring.	0	4	18	11	3.21	.650	Medium
10	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers can control the learning process after mentoring.	0	5	17	11	3.18	.683	Medium
11	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers is adept at guiding students in teaching and learning after mentoring.	0	4	20	9	3.15	.619	Medium
12	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers always encourage students' emotions by giving compliments after tutoring.	0	5	18	10	3.18	.635	Medium
13	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers uses both traditional and modern teaching aids (BBM).	0	7	16	10	3.09	.723	Medium
14	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers can apply the latest techniques in teaching and learning when Head of Islamic Education Panel provides guidance.	0	4	19	10	3.18	.635	Medium
15	Islamic Education (IEC) teachers can apply differentiated learning if Head of Islamic Education Panel provides guidance	0	5	19	9	3.12	.650	Medium

DISCUSSION

The instrument has a high reliability refers to the value the overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is 0.969. Therefore, this instrument is suitable for use in real studies. The researchers conducted an assessment reliability of this questionnaire to ensure that the items the results of the study were evaluated to ensure that the respondents understood each item with the same understanding.

Overall, the findings show that the practice of mentoring PI committee leaders in schools is still at a moderate level. This shows that mentoring has not yet become a practice and culture in schools. Guidance related to class management and committees, subject content, pedagogy and teaching and learning skills was not given much attention by the Head of Islamic Education Panel. Based on the MOE SPI Number 2 of 2023: guidelines for managing subject committees in schools of the Ministry of education, among the responsibilities of the MOE is to ensure the continuous improvement of professionalism of committee members, including through guidance activities.

There are several aspects that fall under min 3.00, namely aspects of Head of Islamic Education Panel guidance related to curriculum and assessment Standard documents (DSKP), 21st Century Learning, information and Communication Technology (ICT), aspects of perception based on Standard Kualiti Pendidikan Malaysia (SKPM) Kualiti@Sekolah and effective questioning techniques. ICT-related guidance and SKPM-based perception aspects get the lowest mean. Islamic Education (IEC) teachers has confidence at a moderate level in terms of managing the teaching and learning process through the ICT application.

The findings of this study are supported by previous studies such as Siti Roshila & Noraini (2021) that found the level of ICT-based fuel consumption among the Islamic Education (IEC) teachers has confidence was at a moderate level. Raja Nor Azuwah & Nik Rosila (2022) who proposed that schools and the Ministry of Education Malaysia be proposed to formulate programs that are continuous training related to the use of Information Technology (ICT) in teaching and learning. In addition, the researchers found that the Islamic Education (IEC) teachers felt that mentoring practices had less impact on improving the quality of teachers. This is evidenced by the findings of studies that show the overall mean is at a moderate level. There are two aspects that get the lowest mean, namely the mastery of all the skills needed to teach Islamic Education subjects and the use of traditional teaching aids and modern teaching aids. This is supported by a study by Mohd Syaubari (2021), namely that there are differences in the pattern of teacher understanding in terms of the concept of knowledge, skills and planning.

Previous studies have found that there are several mentoring program issues such as the mentoring program implementation strategy and the implementation period of the new teacher mentoring program that still needs to be streamlined, communication issues due to the mentor teacher is busy with other tasks. This results in new teachers not being able to apply effective teaching methods, approaches, techniques and strategies (Zahanim & Qurratu 'Aini Syamimi, 2018; Juairiah et al. 2020). However, there are also studies that show that the strategic aspect of teaching is at a high level (Siti Nurfitri & Khadijah, 2022). This shows that the experience and skills of mentor teachers in accordance with training needs greatly affect the effectiveness of the new teacher professionalism development program at school (Ariff Hidayat & Mahani, 2022). The ability of mentors can increase career satisfaction and career motivation of menti in study organizations and help new teachers in schools (Zahanim & Qurratu 'Aini Syamimi, 2018; Nor Ain et al., 2020).

Overall, it is concluded that the after-teaching supervision based still needs continuous guidance from the Head of Islamic Education Panel in all aspects so that the teaching and learning can be improved. Previous studies have shown that mentoring can increase self-confidence, promote knowledge and skills sharing and develop mentees personally and professionally (Amelia Adam, 2020). This is because mentoring is a teaching-learning process that contributes to improvement and academic performance (Nayara Fernandes et al., 2015; t. Athanasiou et al., 2016).

The findings of this study are anticipated to provide valuable insights for schools, the State Education Department, and the Ministry of Education in developing effective mentoring programs. Mentoring initiatives should address the specific needs and challenges faced by teachers in schools, including issues related to novice teachers, non-optional teachers, and the quality of teaching and learning. The

implications of this study indicate that mentoring practices in schools positively influence the quality of post-teaching supervision, particularly in the realm of teaching and learning.

CONCLUSION

The results of this pilot study indicate that the questionnaire instrument is suitable for future research samples. This study emphasizes the significance of mentoring practices by the Head of the Islamic Education Panel in schools. As part of the Middle Leadership Team (MLT), the Head of the Islamic Education Panel plays a crucial role in providing ongoing guidance and mentoring to enhance the quality of the teachers being supported. Additionally, the Head of the Islamic Education Panel could focus on improving skills across knowledge, capabilities, and other relevant areas. Consequently, all stakeholders, including administrators, Senior Leadership Teams (SLT), and MLT, could ensure that mentoring practices are consistently implemented in schools. Moreover, regular monitoring should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the mentoring program and facilitate necessary improvements. The findings of this study are expected to assist various parties in designing suitable mentoring programs that will enhance the quality of teacher instruction.

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